

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-41 are pending. Claims 1, 12, 19, 30, and 35 are amended.

Claims 1-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lewis (U.S. 6,233,565) in view of Pang (U.S. 6,446,204). Applicant submits that all of the claims currently pending for consideration are patentably distinguishable over the cited references, and reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Independent claims 1 and 30 include, among other limitations, "generating a textual representation of a digital signature from the message digest," "generating the indicium, wherein the indicium includes the textual representation of the digital signature and the 2-D bar code," and "each stateless cryptomodule being programmable to service any of the plurality of remotely located user computers." Neither Lewis nor Pang, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the above limitations.

**First**, with respect to limitation of "generating a textual representation of a digital signature from the message digest," Lewis does not teach or suggest this limitation. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that FIGs. 4A and 4B of Lewis teach "a textual representation of a digital signature from the message digest." Rather, the only textual representations in FIGs. 4A and 4B of Lewis are the meter number, the postage amount, the date, the class of postage, and an address, none of which is "a textual representation of a digital signature [generated] from the message digest." Additionally, Pang does not cure the above deficiency of Lewis.

**second**, with respect to limitation of "wherein the indicium includes the textual representation of the digital signature and the 2-D bar code," Lewis does not teach or suggest this limitation. Firstly, as discuss above, Lewis does not teach a textual representation of a digital signature. Secondly, Lewis does not teach an indicium that includes a textual representation of a digital signature and a 2-D bar code. Additionally, Pang does not cure the above deficiency of Lewis.

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**Third**, with respect to limitation of "each stateless cryptomodule being programmable to service any of the plurality of remotely located user computers," as the Examiner agrees, Lewis does not teach this limitation. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's assertion that Pang teaches the above limitation. In the cited portion of Pang, a "system 600 includes an authentication server 252 that is connected to multiple dispatchers 214, 220 and 226 through object request broker 282. Authentication server 252 comprises an authentication engine 602, an authentication host 604 and a plurality of authentication service providers (simply referred to as providers) 606, 608, 610 and 612." (Col. 18, line 64 - col. 19, line 3, underlining added.).

The Examiner construes the authentication service providers 606, 608, 610 and 612 as the stateless cryptomodules of the claimed invention, however, Pang is very clear that these providers 606, 608, 610 and 612 can NOT "service any of the plurality of remotely located user computers." Rather, a request is forwarded to an appropriate provider and not any provider (col. 19, lines 13-14), because "[e]ach provider provides a specific authentication function to restrict access to a particular cartridge. For example, a BASIC provider may be associated with the authentication host and used to restrict cartridge access to only those browser requests that are associated with a particular username and password pair." (Col. 20, lines 25-31, underlining added.). Therefore, each provider of Pang can NOT "service any of the plurality of remotely located user computers." Consequently, the combination of Lewis and Pang does not teach or suggest the above limitation.

As a result, for at least the above **three reasons**, independent claims 1 and 13 are patentable in view of Lewis and Pang combination.

Independent claims 12 and 19 include, among other limitations, "each stateless cryptomodule programmable to service any remotely located user computer," "generating a text representation of a digital signature," and "generating the indicium, wherein the indicium includes the textual representation of the digital signature and the 2-D bar code." As described above neither Lewis nor Pang, alone or in combination teach or suggest the above limitations. As a result, independent claims 12 and 19 are also patentable in view of Lewis and Pang.

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Independent claim 35 recites "A value bearing indicium (VBI) comprising: a 2-D barcode including relevant information; and a text representation of a digital signature generated from a message digest, the message digest generated using a secure hash algorithm to hash the relevant information, wherein the 2-D bar code excludes the digital signature." **First**, as discussed above, neither Lewis nor Pang, alone or in combination teach or suggest the limitation of "a text representation of a digital signature generated from a message digest." **Second**, neither Lewis nor Pang, alone or in combination teach or suggest the limitation of "wherein the 2-D bar code excludes the digital signature," because as clearly stated by Lewis, the 2-D bar code of FIGs. 4A and 4B includes the digital signature, in fact, the 2-D bar code is the digital signature.

As a result, for at least the above **two reasons**, independent claim 35 is also patentable in view of Lewis and Pang combination.

In short, the independent claims 1, 12, 19, 30 and 35 define a novel and unobvious invention over the cited references. Dependent claims 2-11, 13-18, 20-29, 31-34, and 36-41 are dependent from allowable claims 1, 12, 19, 30 and 35, respectively and therefore include all the limitations of their respective independent claims and additional limitations therein. Accordingly, these claims are also allowable over the cited references, as being dependent from allowable independent claims 1, 12, 19, 30 and 35 and for the additional limitations they include therein.

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, therefore, reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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